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**Official Report
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(Hansard)**

P-10

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

P-10

**Standing Committee on
Public Accounts**

Committee business

1st Session
44th Parliament
Monday 11 May 2026

**Comité permanent des
comptes publics**

Travaux du comité

1^{re} session
44^e législature
Lundi 11 mai 2026

Chair: Tom Rakocevic
Clerk: Thushitha Kobikrishna

Président : Tom Rakocevic
Greffière : Thushitha Kobikrishna

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES COMPTES PUBLICS

Monday 11 May 2026

Lundi 11 mai 2026

The committee met at 1233 in room 151.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Good afternoon, everyone. I would like to call the meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to order.

Failure of sound system.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): We're going to quickly recess to deal with, possibly, an AV issue for five minutes.

The committee recessed from 1233 to 1234.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Okay, everyone, let's start from the top again. Good afternoon. I would like to call the meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to order.

The first item on the agenda for today is a filed notice of motion by MPP Bell. I will turn the floor over to MPP Bell to move her motion.

Ms. Jessica Bell: I move that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts request the Auditor General undertake a special audit into the government of Ontario's purchase and subsequent resale of a private aircraft, including the total acquisition cost, operating and maintenance expenses, resale value and any financial losses to taxpayers arising from the purchase, outfitting, operation and resale of the aircraft.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Is there any debate?

Ms. Jessica Bell: I can start off.

The reason why I'm introducing this motion and why I'm taking it to public accounts is because it's the Auditor General's responsibility to make sure that the government is making value-for-money decisions. It seems reasonable to me, given the number of unanswered questions that we have right now, that there is an investigation into what actually happened, how much it cost, when it happened and when and if the jet has been sold.

I also see the value in comparing the decision to purchase a private jet with other options to allow the Premier and ministers to travel around the province, such as using a chartered plane or flying commercial like everyone else.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Any further debate? MPP Fairclough.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Thank you for bringing forward this motion. I think it's an important motion for us to consider as a committee. There was \$29 million spent that, subsequently, we really haven't gotten too many answers

to when we've asked for receipts, we've asked for what the total cost would be. I don't think that it was mentioned even in the budget that this was the plan to spend funds this year.

The reason why I think it's important for the Auditor General to consider it is to have a very objective look at the issue and how we came to the decisions. Constituents in my own riding have contacted me—a number of them have contacted me about this, but especially on the heels of the decisions on the freedom-of-information law changes as well.

So at a time when I think a lot of people are struggling to pay for groceries and rent, struggling to understand why we aren't able to necessarily access the care that we need, I think this was a surprise to many, to hear about this plane in the way that we did. And I think we have asked, on several occasions, that the government to be able to produce some of the receipts, some of the information that we need to understand the full scope of the decision, and the Auditor General would be a third-party, separate review of that.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Any further debate? MPP Dixon.

Ms. Jess Dixon: Just to note, the government will not be supporting this motion.

We take the perspective that under the Auditor General's full, comprehensive powers, she has her own authority to look into any issue that she feels is important to look into, as far as the Ontario taxpayer goes. She also has, in doing so, comprehensive access to other government records.

We believe that we will leave it up to the Auditor General to make that determination as she reviews all of the many, many issues that are either referred to her for her further attention or initiated by her and her office directly.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Further debate? MPP Bell.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you for that, MPP Dixon. That's exactly why I think it's appropriate to bring in a motion today to make it clear that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts would like the Auditor General to investigate this issue.

Certainly, the Auditor General has the authority to decide what she's going to investigate, but we also have power as a committee to direct and request the Auditor General to investigate things that are important. And given the lack of clarity that we have over the purchase of the

jet, the cost, if it has been sold, when the decision was made, who made the decision, how much the refurbishments cost—there are a lot of unknowns—it seems reasonable that it’s an appropriate thing for the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to call for.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Thank you. Further debate?

Ms. Jessica Bell: Let’s take it to a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Okay. Further debate? MPP Fairclough.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I too just want to underscore that I think it’s really important that the public understand what led to the purchase of this. Again, I need to just say that, from our constituents’ perspective, they are interested to know as well. So it is an opportunity for our public accounts committee to certainly let the Auditor General know that this is an important issue from our perspective but also making that request on behalf of our constituents.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): Thank you. Any further debate? Seeing none, are members ready to vote?

Ayes

Bell, Fairclough.

Nays

Dixon, Dowie, Firin, Rosenberg, Sandhu, David Smith.

The Chair (Mr. Tom Rakocevic): I declare the motion lost.

We will now recess for five minutes to allow the committee to move into closed session for report-writing.

The committee recessed at 1242 and later continued in closed session.

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